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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7207  
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SUBJECT: IBAMA RESPONSIBLE FOR TOPPLING TWO MORE MAJOR ILLEGAL  
LOGGING OPERATIONS

¶1. Ibama, Brazil's Environmental Protection Agency, has executed two major operations against illegal logging in the month of September. The first one, a three-week long operation, code named Guariba, confiscated 8,500 cubic meters of sawn wood and logs in the state of Mato Grosso. Operation Guariba is a joint effort between Ibama, the Brazilian Army and the Federal Police with the goal of stemming the rate of deforestation in the Amazon. Over 35 soldiers are stationed in the region and they have confiscated various equipment used by the loggers, such as trucks and tractors.

¶2. The second operation, Kojima, took place in the state of Para. Authorities impounded over 25,000 cubic meters of wood and levied fines that totaled more than US\$ 650,000. According to Ibama, this is the largest seizure ever in the state. Ibama investigated twelve timber companies during the operation and shut down seven of them. Four other companies were fined for operating without a license. Kojima is planned to continue until December.

¶3. Both operations are part of the GoB's Federal Plan for Prevention of Deforestation in the Amazon. The plan, in action since 2004, has impounded over 810,000 cubic meters of wood, as well as, issued over US\$ 1,4 billion worth of fines. Ibama and Federal police were responsible for eleven major operations in the Amazon alone.

¶4. Following on news of Kojima and Guariba, President Lula and Environmental Minister, Marina Silva, declared a 30% drop in the rate of Amazon deforestation for the period of August 2005 to August 2006. According to Silva, Ibama undertook 95 operations in 2006 arresting 379 people. If the decrease in deforestation is confirmed, it will be the lowest total registered since 1991.

SOBEL